

NORTHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting on June 10, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Pam Knox at 6:42 pm.

- I. ROLL CALL:** Present were Commissioners Pam Knox, Russ Barrett, Christine Barnes, Leslie Matthews, Don Wallace, and Laura Hill-Eubanks.
- II. SET/ADJUST AGENDA:** Addition of two topics.
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (scheduled):** None
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** May 13, 2015 minutes approve 4-0-2
 - a. Forest Stewardship Plan – revisions, trail hike, grant:** Christine would like the NCC to approve the Action Plan for the Town Forest Stewardship Plan. Commissioners will review and update for next meeting. Will also look at how the future natural resources inventory of the Town Forest fits into the Acton Plan.

NCC has been awarded a grant of \$5000 by the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program, Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation. The grant will be used to conduct a natural resources inventory in the Town Forest in order to facilitate the work on the Town Forest Stewardship Plan. A natural communities assessment should be part of the inventory. A consulting ecologist should be hired soon to start work. Russ will collect information on consultants that may be available and distribute to the NCC members. Ruth also has information on ecologists. NCC will discuss the grant at its next meeting.

NCC will plan a hike for the next week in June in order to assess the uses and conditions of the trails on Paine Mountain. A public hike is tentatively planned for July 18th.

NCC will contact other organizations for input on trail management in the forest. Christine will set up a meeting with Norwich to discuss their policies and operations regarding trails at the Shaw Center.

Leslie will work on completing the public survey analysis.

- b. Urban Forestry Grants – mini-grants:**

NCC has been awarded an AVCC (Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions) Tiny Grant in the amount of \$400. The grant will be used to make educational/conservation and trail signs for the Town Forest. The signs should probably be made of metal considering that previous signs have been vandalized. Discussed the possibility of naming trails as detailed in the Osgoode book about Paine Mountain. Will discuss grant further at next meeting.

Pam finished the project with students that made educational posters for the Mini Tree grant. NCC members enjoyed reviewing the posters and were very impressed with the quality and creativity of the posters, which documented the potential impacts of pests on the ash trees in the town and the forest. The students seemed to have learned a great deal and colorfully incorporated this knowledge into their artwork. The posters will be displayed around the town. Christine will write an article on the project.

- c. **Tree Grant:** The Urban Tree Inventory project now requires that a tree management plan be developed before the grant expiration deadline. NCC will work with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission on this. This will be followed up on at the next NCC meeting.
- d. **Bylaws update:** Laura has forwarded recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding the Bylaws update. The PC is in the process of preparing regulations and uses for new zoning districts. NCC has asked that riparian buffers, low impact stormwater development management techniques, and protections for forest and wildlife habitat be incorporated.
- e. **Meeting with Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Council:** NCC members attended a meeting with the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Council that took place today in the Brown Public Library. Attendees included representatives from the Urban and Community Forestry Program, the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, County Foresters, and others with an interest in forestry management and town forests. Danielle Fitzko from the VT UCF program organized and led the meeting. Richard Amore of ACCD updated the group on the Vermont Downtown Action Team proposals for Northfield. Dan Currier of the CVRPC led the group on a tour of the new stormwater management system at Kenyon's hardware store. Michele Braun led a tour of the site that is planned to be used for the new Water St park area and that was the area of flooding and subsequent home buyouts by FEMA. Planning for the park is ongoing and should incorporate flood mitigation, including riparian buffers, in its design. The group then toured the Northfield Town Forest, led by Russ Barrett of the NCC.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED): None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Hill-Eubanks, Northfield Conservation Commission.

These minutes are subject to changes and approval at the next regular meeting, but are substantially correct.